

COUNTY ELECTED OFFICIALS

Mississippi has 82 counties, 72 of which have one county seat. The other ten have two county seats due to the division of court districts.

Mississippi became a territory of the United States in 1798. On December 10, 1817, Mississippi became the twentieth state admitted to the Union. Counties organized prior to statehood and their organization dates are: Adams (1798), Amite (1809), Claiborne (1802), Franklin

(1809), Greene (1811), Hancock (1817), Jackson (1812), Jefferson (1799 as “Pickering”; named “Jefferson” in 1802), Lawrence (1814), Marion (1811), Pike (1815), Warren (1809), Washington (1800), Wayne (1809), and Wilkinson (1802). The last county formed was Humphreys County in 1918.

County boundaries were changed over time to accommodate the formation of new counties.

COUNTYWIDE OFFICES

Chancery Clerks, Circuit Clerk, and Tax Assessor and/or Tax Collector

Qualifications: These officers must be qualified electors of the county in which election is sought. The qualifying fee is \$15.

Duties: The Chancery Clerk is elected to a four-year term and may run for re-election. The Chancery Clerk is the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors and of the Chancery Court. The Clerk is responsible for maintaining the records of both the Board and the Court.

The Circuit Clerk is elected to a four-year term and may run for re-election. The Clerk is the chief officer of the Circuit Court and chief elections officer of the county. The Clerk maintains the voter rolls and assists the Election Commissioners in purging the voter rolls, and assists election officials to conducting primary and general elections.

The Tax Assessor and/or Tax Collector may serve in both capacities in all counties. This official is elected to a four-year term and may run for re-election. The Assessor’s role is to

maintain the personal, real and ad valorem tax rolls of the county. The Collector is responsible for keeping the records of tax payments and depositing the money in the county treasury.

Coroner

Qualifications: The Coroner must be a qualified elector, at least 21 years of age, of the county in which election is sought. The qualifying fee is \$10.

Duties: The Coroner is elected to a four-year term and may run for re-election. The Coroner is the chief county medical examiner and/or county medical examiner investigator. This official is responsible for issuing declarations of death and performing or reporting results of autopsies in cases requiring such action.

County Prosecutor

Qualifications: The County Prosecuting Attorney must be a qualified elector and a regular licensed and practicing attorney. The qualifying fee is \$15.

Duties: The County Prosecuting Attorney represents the state in all investigations for felony in justice court

and county court and in all criminal cases appealed to the circuit court from county court. The county prosecutor may assist the district attorney, present matters to the county grand jury, and has responsibility for some youth court proceedings. The county attorney is elected to a four-year term and may run for re-election.

County Surveyor

Qualifications: The County Surveyor must be a registered land surveyor and a qualified elector of the county in which election is sought.

Duties: The County Surveyor executes all orders of survey directed to him by any court, all surveys of land within his county at the request of the owners or proprietors, and to survey, resurvey, measure, and divide land as requested by the county board of supervisors.

Sheriff

Qualifications: The Sheriff must not be a defaulter to the State or any county or municipality or to the United States and a qualified elector. The qualifying fee is \$15.

Duties: The Sheriff is the chief law enforcement officer of the county and is elected to a four-year term. He may run for re-election. The sheriff is the chief officer of the chancery and circuit courts and maintains the county law library. The sheriff is in charge of the county courthouse, jail, and protection of prisoners.

Superintendent of Education

Mississippi has five different types of school districts:

Consolidated School Districts—lie

wholly within one county, but do not include municipal separate and county; **Line Consolidated School Districts**—embrace territory in two or more counties, but do not include municipal separate districts; **Municipal Separate School Districts**—encompass the boundary of municipality, and may have added territory; **Special Municipal Separate School Districts**—municipal separate districts which have been reconstituted or reorganized with added territory exclusive of any added territory which was part of the municipal separate school district before reorganization; **County School Districts**—lie wholly within a county and are not constituted as either form of consolidated or municipal district. Superintendents of Education in all districts with the exception of county districts are appointed. County Superintendents of Education are elected with the exception of Hinds County.

Qualifications: A Superintendent of Education must be a qualified elector, the holder of a valid Class AA Administrator's certificate issued by the State Department of Education, and not less than four years of classroom and/or administrative experience.

Duties: The Miss. Code Ann. (1972) provides for a county Superintendent of Education to be in each county. The Superintendent is elected for a term of four years and may seek re-election. The Superintendent of Education is the chief administrative officer of the school district. The Superintendent serves as the executive secretary of the county board of education, but has no vote in the proceedings before the board and no voice in fixing its policies. The

Superintendent is the director of all schools in the county outside the municipal separate school districts.

COUNTY DISTRICT OFFICES

Constable

Qualifications: A Constable must be a qualified elector in the county and district in which election is sought. The qualifying fee is \$10.

Duties: Constables shall keep and preserve the peace within his county, by aiding and assisting in executing the criminal laws of the state for the Justice Courts of his district. Constables shall obey all lawful orders and execute all judgments for Justice Courts within this district.

Justice Court Judge

Qualifications: A Justice Court Judge must be a qualified elector, a resident of the county and district for two (2) years preceding the day of election, and complete course of training required by law within six (6) months of the beginning of the term in office. The qualifying fee is \$10.

Duties: Justice Court Judges shall have civil and criminal jurisdiction of all actions where the principal of the debt, amount of the demand, or the value of the property sought to be recovered shall not exceed \$2,500.

Supervisor

Qualifications: County Supervisors must be qualified electors of the county and a resident in the district in which election is sought. The qualifying fee is \$15.

Duties: Supervisors shall have the power to adopt, modify, alter, or repeal orders, resolutions or ordinances in their

respective county and district not inconsistent with law. In general, supervisors have jurisdiction over roads, ferries, bridges, tax levies, courthouses and jails, county-owned real property, appropriation of funds, contractual powers of municipality as well as other powers expressly authorized by law.

Election Commissioners

Qualifications: Election Commissioners must be qualified electors of the supervisor district in which election is sought.

Duties: An Election Commissioner's general duties include conducting non-partisan elections, certifying election results, and purging voter rolls.

APPOINTED OFFICES

Board Attorney

Qualifications: A Board Attorney must be qualified to practice law in Mississippi.

Duties: The Board Attorney is not an elected office. This person represents the county's Board of Supervisors by their appointment.

Justice Court Clerk

Qualifications: The Board of Supervisors of each county shall appoint one (1) person to serve as clerk of the justice court system.

Duties: The clerk shall file and record actions and pleadings, acknowledge affidavits, issue warrants in criminal cases, certify and issue copies of records, documents, and pleadings filed in the justice court, collect any fines or costs required by the justice court, and to issue all process necessary for the operation of the justice court.